

Senator Bye, Representative Walker, and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Mary Ann Mahony, and I am Professor of History and Coordinator of the Committee on Latin American Studies of the International and Area Studies Program and AAUP Chapter President at Central Connecticut State University. I am here to support the Board of Regents request for additional funding for the Connecticut State Universities, but also to express frustration that none of the monies are specifically earmarked for full time, tenure track, faculty lines. Let me explain why.

My specialty is Latin American History, specifically modern Brazil, but I teach a broad range of courses from general education surveys of colonial and postcolonial Latin America, to upper division undergraduate and graduate specialty courses in Latin American history and International Studies, as well as required methods classes. This semester my advanced students are working on topics from Latin American immigration to Spain, to Afro-Colombian social movements; Dominican bodegas, and Brazilian soccer. This week in my Latin American history survey, we are discussing the ways in which the nations of Latin America reacted to the Great Depression and the Two World Wars.

Today, I did not have class, but that does not mean that I wasn't working. This morning, I spent two hours grading and catching up on the news from Venezuela and Mexico; and another hour preparing for two meetings this afternoon; this afternoon, I spent 2 ½ hours in meetings and another hour at a campus lecture on Technology and Innovation by BOR Chair Nick Donofrio. In between, I tried to catch up on my e-mail. This evening when I get home, I will do the reading for tomorrow's classes.

My students include both traditional and nontraditional learners. Nearly all of them are working at least 20 hours a week, while taking 5 classes. They come from Connecticut, as well as several other states, Puerto Rico, and perhaps a dozen foreign countries. Their backgrounds are diverse in terms of ethnicity, race and class. Many have children. Some have excellent reading, writing and speaking skills in English and Spanish and/or Portuguese; others struggle, whether because they are overcommitted, because they have some sort of disability or because they attended schools that did not serve them well. They are all concerned about tuition increases.

These students require a great deal of faculty time and attention. Helping them navigate their complicated schedules; discussing career plans and concerns; mentoring and guiding them through the demands of classes, family and paid employment. They frequently need emotional support, and they always need help trying to decide on research paper or capstone project topics. Because I am committed to helping students develop their own interests, I frequently find myself reading up on topics completely new to me so that I can advise their work.

Part time faculty do not do what I do: They do not advise students or supervise theses and capstones; they do not have the time to develop the in-depth relationships with students that leads to degree completion. I urge you therefore, to support funding for increased full-time, tenure-track faculty lines. Thank you.